CAREER MATURITY AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RELATION TO SELF-ESTEEM, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

A SYNOPSIS

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INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario the importance of the career education and career guidance programmes has been recognized for secondary and senior secondary students, especially in the context of recent changes in Indian education system which aims to bridge the gap between education and life efforts by making education more work- oriented. In the present system the ten year general schooling focuses on socially useful productive work and work-experience programmes. After this stage the students have to make a choice of courses from among the academic and vocational streams available in school for two years of senior secondary education, followed by three years of tertiary level education. The National Policy on education, 1986 emphasizes the development of potentialities of every child in the school for proper utilization of vast human resources for national development. It also stresses the need and importance of inculcating positive attitudes towards all kinds of work. Kothari commission (1964-66) also gives stress on the vocational aspect of education. One of the recommendations given by Kothari Commission Report reads that "At the secondary stage the pattern of education should be such that it will enable the students to acquire proficiency in some aspect so that they can get an opportunity to get self employment". Career maturity is the readiness to make appropriate career decisions. Career maturity is a constellation of physical, psychological and social characteristics thus belonging to both the domains that of cognitive and affective. It is central to a developmental approach to understanding vocational behaviour and involves an assessment of an individual's level of career progress in relation to his or her career-relevant development tasks. It refers, broadly, to the individual's readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and cope with career development tasks (Savickas, 1984). Fundamentally, Crites's (1971) model of career maturity consists of affective and cognitive dimensions. The cognitive dimension is composed of decision-making skills; the affective dimension includes attitudes toward the career decision-making process.

CAREER MATURITY

Career maturity is the individual's ability to make appropriate career choices, including awareness of what are required to make a career decision and degree to which one choice are both realistic and consistence over time. Career maturity is a construct that has been investigated, measured, and debated for over 30 years. The term was first used by Super (1957) in his career development theory and can be defined as the extent to which an

individual has measured the age-appropriate vocational tasks relevant to his or her developmental stage. The highlighted aspects of career maturity includes: 1. Obtaining information about oneself and converting such information to self-knowledge; 2. Acquiring decision- making skills and applying them in effective decision- making; 3. Gathering career information and converting it into knowledge of the occupational world; 4. Integrating self-knowledge and knowledge of the occupational world; and 5. Implementing the obtained knowledge in career planning. Career maturity is conceptualized as an individual's readiness to make well informed, age – appropriate career decision, and to shape one's career carefully in the face of existing societal opportunities and constraints (Salami 2008). Although educational and vocational choices are made by an individual but they are certainly influenced by many social and environmental factors which include socio-economic status of the family, home and family environment, sex, age, rural and urban background psychological factors which may include self-esteem, educational aspiration, academic achievement etc. According to Super (1977) Career maturity can be defined as "the way in which an individual successfully complete certain career development tasks that are required according to his current developmental phase."

Donald Super's Theory: Career Maturity

According to Super, career is enclosed in both the life-span and the life-space, including life roles and lifestyle. Career maturity appears to be one of the major concepts in Super's theory which refers to the successful accomplishment of age and stage developmental tasks across the life span. Specifically, Super defines career maturity as:

A constellation of physical, psychological and social characteristics; psychologically, it is both cognitive and affective. It includes the degree of success in coping with the demands of earlier stages and sub-stages of career development especially with the most recent.

Super further explains that career maturity is an individual's readiness to cope with the developmental task with which he or she is confronted due to his or her biological and social development along with social expectations from those who have reached the stage of development.

Super's Life Career Stages

In Super's Life Career Stages (refer to Table 1), the five major stages are classified as growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline (disengagement). As for transitions, they are the mini stages in which important events take place.

Table 1 Super's Life Career Stages

Stage	Ages	Characteristics
Growth	Birth to 14 or 15	Development of self-concept, capacity, attitudes, interests, needs, general understanding of the world of work.
Exploratory	15 – 24	"Trying out" through classes, work experience, hobbies, tentative choice and related skill development
Establishment	25 – 44	Entry-level skill building and stabilization through work experience.
Maintenance	45 – 64	Continual adjustment process to improve position.
Decline	65+	Reduced output, prepare for retirement.

Growth Stage refers to the physical and psychological growth which is crucial for self-concept development.

Exploratory stage starts with the individual's awareness that occupation is an aspect of life. The choices expressed during the fantasy phase of this stage are frequently not realistic and associated with the play life. They usually have little long-term significant impact on the individual. Yet, some people might not advance beyond the fantasy phase and the lack of understanding about themselves along with the work hinder them from making an effective choice. In the tentative phase of the exploratory stage, the individual narrows choices to a few possibilities. Due to the ambiguity of one's ability, training available, and employment opportunity, the options might be changing. Later, the individual further narrows the list to occupations that they think are achievable and important during the final phase before entering the working world.

Establishment Stage is related to the early encounters within actual work experiences.

During the maintenance stage, the individual pursues to improve the occupational situation..

Decline stage includes the pre-retirement period where people's concern is placed on keeping the job and meeting the minimum requirement of productivity.

The five stages in Super's Vocational Developmental Tasks (refer to Table 2) apply to the whole life; these same stages are enacted in a mini-version within each age group.

Table 2 Vocational Developmental Tasks for a Life Span

Vocational	Ages	General Characteristics/Developmental Tasks
Crystallization	14 – 18	Developing and planning a tentative vocational goal.
Specification	18 – 21	Firming the vocational goal.
Implementation	21 – 24	Training for and obtaining employment.
Stabilization	24 – 35	Working and confirming career choice.
Consolidation	35+	Advancement in career.

In each stage one has to successfully manage the vocational development tasks that are socially expected of persons in the given chronological age range. For example, in the stage of exploration (age around 15-24) an adolescent has to cope with the vocational developmental tasks of crystallisation, specification and implementation. Super (1990) the concept of "career maturity" was used to denote the degree that a person was able to fulfil the vocational development tasks required in each developmental stage.

SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude toward the self. Self – esteem has been described as the judgement that we make about our own worth and the feeling associated with those judgements. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent," "I am worthy") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame. Self-esteem is also known as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feelings of worthiness, prides and discouragement. One's self-esteem is also closely associated with self-consciousness. Self-esteem is a disposition that a person has which represents their judgments of their own worthiness.

As a social psychological construct, self-esteem is attractive because researchers have conceptualized it as an influential predictor of relevant outcomes, such as academic achievement or exercise behaviour i.e. habits. Self-evaluation is important because the subject is able to assess what they know, what they do not know and what they would like to know. They begin to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, and will be able to set goals that they know they can attain with the new knowledge they have about themselves.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Academic Achievement is the end-product of all educational endeavours. Academic achievement of pupils refers to the knowledge attained and skills developed in school subjects. So, academic achievement means the achievement of students in the academic subjects in relation to their knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in grades or units based on pupil's performance. Academic achievement is of paramount importance. It has been indicated that a good number of variables such as; personality characteristics of the learners, the organizational climate of the school, curriculum planning , teaching learning setup, variables arising out of home, influence achievement in different degrees. Each of them is actually a cluster of variables which individually or on interaction with others have their influence on achievement. The world is becoming more and more competitive. Quality of performance has become the key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of performance to as high a level as possible. This desire for a high level of achievement puts a lot of pressure on students, teachers, and schools and in general the education system itself. In fact, it appears as if the whole system of education revolves round the academic achievement of students, though various other outcomes are also expected from the system. Thus a lot of time and effort of the schools are used for helping students to achieve better in their scholastic endeavours. Students whose academic performance is superior in the form of high percentage of marks are taken as successful candidates. On the other hand students who fail in the previous examination and obtain low divisions in their examination are considered as individuals who have failed on their achievements. Good (1959) refers to academic achievement as, "The knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects usually designed by test scores or marks assigned by the teacher".

VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

A vocation is a special grace given to an individual person upon whom the purpose of their entire life finds its prefect meaning and solution. Aspiration is the target a person sets for him to achieve. They create a “desire” or “will” in him. Formation of a strong desire and ambition motivates individual to strive hard to achieve that goal. Vocational aspirations refer to decision made by a student on his / her future work, occupation or career or profession. Vocational aspirations are attitudes of likes and dislikes towards things and attitudes of vocational significance. These attitudes influence the life adjustments in general and vocational adjustments in particular, which in turn lead to satisfaction with one’s life and a person engaged in a vocation, not directly or indirectly satisfying his/her needs, dispositions, fail to fulfil the vocational expectations. Vocational aspirations are for young or older adults to either start a new career or enter a new vocational career that they have never done. Vocational aspirations of the students are the prospective vocational choices of the student which they intended to adopt in future.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Chandna (1990) found that factors related to career maturity may differ for males and females and there is significant relationship between self concept and career choice attitude of adolescent.

Singh (1997) conducted a study on maturity of career attitudes and cognitive competencies in different academic streams of +2 students and found that science students are more vocationally mature than the commerce and arts students. It may be due to the fact that science students are higher on cognitive abilities than arts and commerce students.

Ogunsanwo (2000) studied that most secondary school students in Nigeria are not vocationally mature by the time they are leaving school. Because the technical aspects of the secondary school curriculum could not be fully implemented due to lack of qualified personnel and equipment.

Patton and Creed (2002) found that gender differences are evident on work commitment and career maturity.

Dhillon and Kaur (2005) conducted a study on career maturity of school children and found that students of public schools possess a higher career maturity attitude and career maturity

competence than government school students. They also indicated that the environment of the schools plays a significant role in the development of career maturity.

Nair (2005) found that students of government schools show better career maturity than students of private schools.

Hasan (2006) studied that self-concept, occupational aspiration and gender were found to be potential enough in generating variance in career maturity. On comparison of public vocational aspiration and gender and government schools, the results clearly indicated that the students of public schools possess a higher career maturity attitude, career maturity competence, as well as self concept and achievement motivation as compared to government schools.

Kostko (2008) analyzed career maturity of 722 students from private and public secondary schools. A significant relationship was found between school type and gender in career decision-making self-efficacy as well as relationship between grades level and school type. Also it was found that private school students' career decision making self-beliefs were not significantly different from their public school counterparts.

Salami (2008) conducted a study on gender, identity status and career maturity of adolescents in south west Nigeria and found no significant difference in career maturity of adolescents boys and girls.

Bozgeyikli et al (2009) found significance difference in career decision making self-efficacy and career maturity among students having different socio-economic status.

Thakur (2011) studied career maturity of secondary school students in relation to their school environment and reported a significant difference between some dimensions of career maturity (i.e. attitude, occupational information, goal orientation and planning) of eleventh grade students of government and private secondary schools.

Saxena et al (2012) found that there is significant difference in the career maturity of boys of different faculties belonging to Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education and Central Board of Secondary Education. The career maturity of boys of CBSE is found to be more than M.P Board. (2) There is significant difference found in the career maturity of girls of different faculties belonging to M.P Board of Secondary Education and Central Board of

Secondary Education. The career maturity of girls of CBSE is found to be more than M.P Board.

Sirohi (2013) revealed that females possess higher career maturity than their male counterparts. Students of private schools show higher career maturity attitude as compared of students of government schools. Moreover, students in schools with vocational guidance and counselling provisions show high career maturity in self awareness and occupational information as compared to none from those schools which are deprived of these provisions, similarly in choosing a job, the students who are privileged to be exposed to the guidance and counselling programmes show much higher career maturity than their underprivileged counterpart.

Sandhu and Aggarwal (2013) found that there will be no significance relationship between vocational maturity and personality of commerce stream students whereas there is positive relationship between vocational maturity and academic achievement of commerce stream students.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Selection of career and setting in it is an important task in student life. In the modern age of science and technology, hundreds of vocations have been thrown open to an individual. The choice of a right vocation is becoming difficult in these days. Senior Secondary stage is the period when a major turning takes place in the life of a student because the career will depend upon the subjects selected at this level. On the recommendation of National Policy on Education 1986, school curriculum after the 10th class has been diversified into academic and vocational streams. Career maturity assumes a great importance in the life of senior secondary school students for their proper future placement. It is the pre-requisite ability to make a wise choice towards particular occupation and represents development along a continuum. The counsellors and the students, and the teachers with whom they work, need an understanding of the types and characteristics of career patterns. This is possible only through close observations, minute monitoring, participative actions and systematic research. The school system has the responsibility of assisting the youth in making competent career decisions that are appropriate to their abilities, aptitudes, interests and other personality characteristics (Salami, 2008). The educational and vocational decisions at this stage cover the way for future decisions to be taken by any individual in the world of work. Any wrong

decision of vocational choice due to pressure of the family or from indecisiveness on the part of students can block his/her growth and development in future. Therefore, it is necessary to study career maturity among senior secondary school students in relation to self esteem, academic achievement and vocational aspirations.

Beside the fact that results of this study will be of great help to school students, principals/ headmasters, teachers of the schools, parents, educational planners and guidance workers will be also benefited from the results of the study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Career Maturity among Senior Secondary School Students in relation to Self- Esteem, Academic Achievement and Vocational Aspirations"

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of career maturity among senior secondary school students.

2. To study the difference in following component of career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to different level of their self-esteem.

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal
iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving
vii. overall

3.To study the difference in following component of career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to different level of their academic achievement.

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal
iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving

vii. overall

4. To study the interaction between level of self-esteem and academic achievement with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

5. To study the correlation between self-esteem and career maturity (overall and component-wise) of senior secondary school students.

6. To study the correlation between academic achievement and career maturity (overall and component-wise) of senior secondary school students.

7. To study the difference in following component of career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to different level of their vocational aspirations.

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal
iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving
vii. overall

8. To study the interaction between level of self-esteem and vocational aspirations with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

9. To study the interaction between level of academic achievement and vocational aspirations with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

10. To study the correlation between vocational aspirations and career maturity (overall and component-wise) of senior secondary school students.

11. To study the interaction between level of self-esteem, academic achievement and vocational aspirations with regard to career maturity (overall and component-wise) of senior secondary school students.

12. To find out and compare the predictive efficacy of self-esteem, academic achievement and vocational aspirations in determining career maturity of senior secondary school students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. Senior secondary school students having different level of self-esteem do not differ significantly in following component of their career maturity:

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal
iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving
vii. overall

2. Senior secondary school students having different level of academic achievement do not differ significantly in following component of their career maturity:

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal
iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving
vii. overall

3. Level of self-esteem and academic achievement do not interact significantly with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

4. There exists no significant relationship between self-esteem and career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

5. There exists no significant relationship between academic achievement and career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

6. Senior secondary school students having different level of vocational aspirations do not differ significantly in following component of their career maturity:

i. attitudinal
ii. self-appraisal

iii. occupational information
iv. goal selection
v. planning
vi. problem-solving
vii. overall

7. Level of self-esteem and vocational aspirations do not interact significantly with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

8. Level of academic achievement and vocational aspirations do not interact significantly with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

9. There exists no significant relationship between vocational aspirations and career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

10. Level of self-esteem, academic achievement and vocational aspirations do not interact significantly with regard to career maturity (overall and component wise) of senior secondary school students.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

(1) This study will be delimited to four Districts of Himachal Pradesh.
(2) The present study will be delimited to Govt. and Private Senior Secondary Schools affiliated to H.P Board of School Education Dharamshala only.
(3) The study will be confined to 11^{th} class students only.
(4) The study will be delimited in terms of variables used i.e. career maturity as dependent variable and self-esteem, academic achievement, vocational aspirations as independent variables and certain demographical variables as intervene variables.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS

Career Maturity- is the term which denotes the place reached on continuum of career development from early exploratory years to decline. Here career maturity is the sum total of its component i.e. attitudinal, self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning and problem solving.

Self-esteem-is a concept that a person has regarded his/her own self which consists of any evaluation that he/she makes of himself /herself or whatever feeling he/she has about himself/herself.

Academic achievement- Academic achievement refers to the achievement of skill and knowledge of a student in an academic session generally in terms of Marks or Grade. In this study academic achievement will be the scores of 10^{th} class examination conducted by H.P Board of School Education Dharamshala.

Vocational Aspirations- are vocational choices of the student which they intended to adopt in future.

Senior Secondary School Students- implies students studying in +1 and +2 classes. In this study +1 class students will be the senior secondary school students.

RESEARCH METHOD TO BE EMPLOYED

To conduct this study 'Survey Technique' under Descriptive Method of Research will be used.

SAMPLING

In this study for selecting the sample, multistage sampling technique will be used.

Students studying in +1 class of senior secondary schools affiliated to Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education, Dharmshala will constitute the population.

In the first stage 12 districts of H.P will be arranged in chronological order on the basis of their literacy rate. After that 12 district of Himachal Pradesh will be divided into four strata having three districts each. From each stratum, one district will be selected using simple random sampling technique. In this way, researcher will select four districts for her study. From these four selected districts, out of total senior secondary school (government and private), 10% schools will be selected randomly. Lastly from the selected senior secondary, schools 5-10 students of class 11^{th} will be selected through systematic random sampling technique. Approximately 1500 11^{th} class boys and girls of government and private senior secondary schools of H.P will constitute the sample.

RESEARCH TOOL TO BE USED

-For measuring the career maturity of senior secondary school students, *Career maturity inventory by Gupta (1989)* will be used. It consists of Attitude Scale and Competency Test.

Its attitude scale contains 50 items and maps the various conative aspects-decisiveness, involvement, independence, orientation and compromise in career decision making. The competence test measures the cognitive variables in choosing an occupation It contains five parts-self appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, problem solving. A test-retest reliability of an attitude scale was calculated with an interval of one month on Indian samples drawn from classes VIII, X and XII with N=40.The obtained correlation ranged from.78 to .82 and split half reliability has been calculated for all the five parts of competence test for the three grade VIII, X and XII levels with N=40.The obtained correlations range from .54 to .88.Attitude scale has high content and construct validity. Construct validity of competence test range from.30-.42.

-To measure the self esteem of senior secondary school students, *Self-esteem Inventory by, Prasad and Thakur. (1977)* will be used. This inventory consists of two parts each parts have 30-30 items in it. First part contains items related to personally-perceived self and second part contains items related to socially-perceived self. The two set of the inventory were administered to a sample of 400 undergraduate male and female students of Bihar University. Split-half reliability co-efficient were calculated for both set of inventory which came out to be .82 and .78 for personally-perceived self and socially-perceived self respectively. Of the 400 students,150 students were administered the two set of the inventory again after a gap of six weeks for evaluating re-test reliability co-efficient were found for both the tests were .69 and .66 respectively for personally-perceived self and socially-perceived self.

RESEARCH TOOL TO BE DEVELOPED

In order to measure the vocational aspirations of the senior secondary school students, the researcher herself will construct and standardize a scale which will be of Likert type in nature.

The investigator will develop vocational aspirations scale by employing following steps:

1**. Item pool-**firstly, the investigator will prepare a list of items/statements which will be pooled from various sources. The items will be pooled after carrying out critical discussions and getting the statements of opinions from the experts, researcher, psychologists and experienced teachers. The items will be developed in the statement from requiring response on a continuum ranging from extreme unfavourable to extreme positive behaviour. The scale will be Likert type in nature.

2.**Revision and editing of the item pool**-After writing the statements, they will be edited and revised .For this the item pool will be given to experts from the field, as well as technical and language expert to judge the content accuracy of each item and its relevance. After carrying out personal discussion about each statement with the expert, their suggestions will be taken into considerations in order to remove any sort of technical, logical and linguistic ambiguity of the statements.

3. **Item analysis of the preliminary draft**-For carrying out item analysis, the preliminary draft of the scale will be tried out on a representative sample of secondary school students. After trying out of the preliminary draft of the tool, the investigator will proceed with the technique of item analysis for the selection of the statements for the final form of the scale. For this, the investigator will calculate‘t-value ‘for each statement separately.

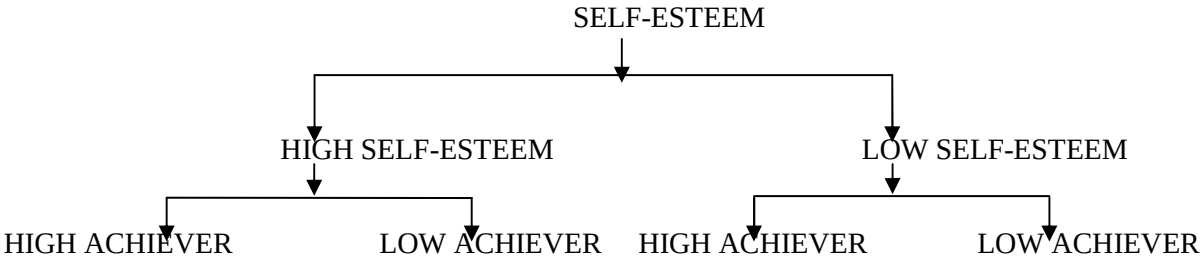
4. **Estimation of reliability**-The reliability of the vocational aspirations will be determined by employing two methods i.e. test-retest method and split-half method.

5. **Ascertaining of validity**-The validity of the vocational aspirations scale will be determined in terms of content validity and criterion related validity.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Following Research design will be employed for realizing the objectives of this study:

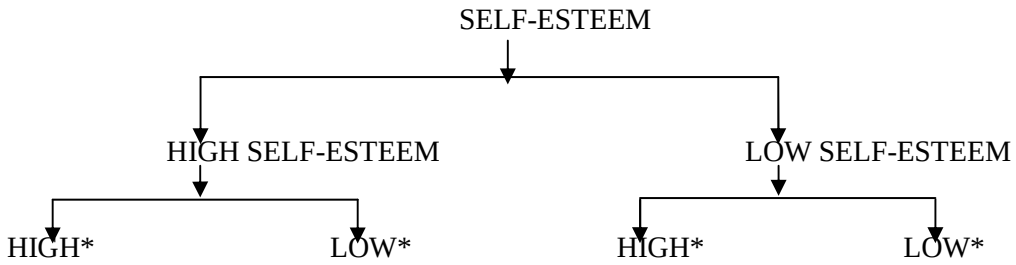
Self-Esteem and Academic Achievement (2x2 Research Design)



(Scores on dependent variable)

Career maturity scores for four groups.

Self-Esteem and Vocational Aspirations (2x2 Research Design)

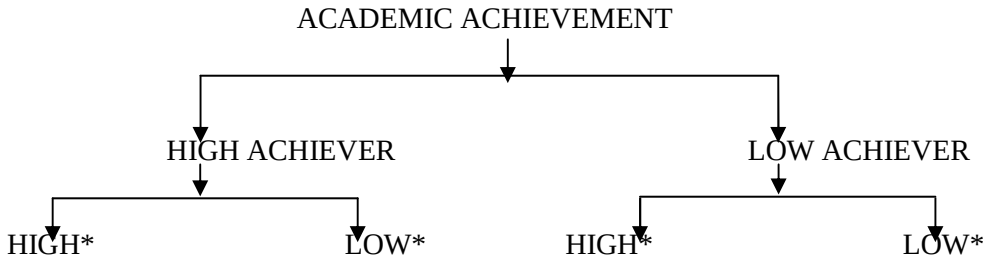


*** VOCATIONAL ASPIRATION**

(Scores on dependent variable)

Career maturity scores for four groups.

Academic achievement and Vocational Aspirations (2x2 Research Design)

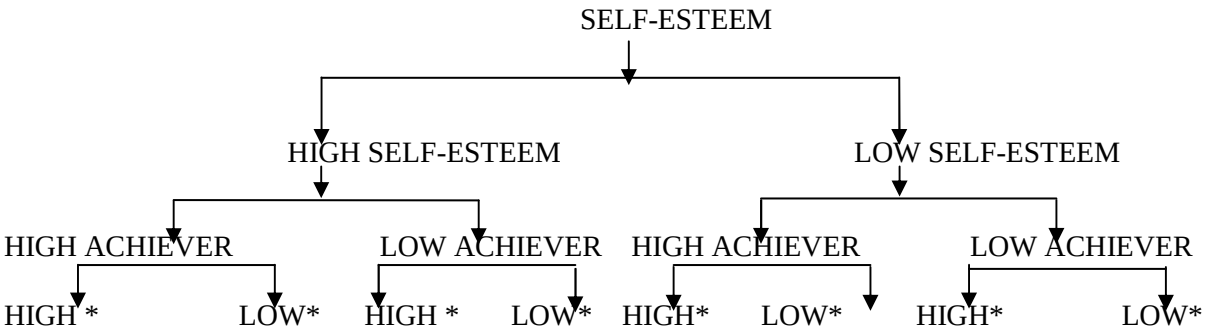


*** VOCATIONAL ASPIRATION**

(Scores on dependent variable)

Career maturity scores for four groups.

Self-Esteem, Academic Achievement and Vocational Aspiration (2x2x2 Research Design)



*** VOCATIONAL ASPIRATION**

(Scores on dependent variable)

Career maturity scores for eight groups.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES TO BE USED

To study main and interaction effects of independent variables with respect to dependent variable Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) will be used. Further, to find out significant relationship between dependent and independent variables ‘product-moment correlation’ will be used and predictive efficacy will be calculated by using ‘linear regression equation’.

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